

We claim:

1. A method for delivering an email message to a recipient, comprising:  
receiving said email message from a sender;  
5 obtaining a presence status of said sender from a presence server, wherein said  
presence status indicates a presence status of said sender across a plurality of domains; and  
delivering said email message to said recipient with an indication of a presence of  
said sender.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said presence server extracts presence  
information from a plurality of presence data stores.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein said presence server translates said presence  
information to a standard format.
- 15 4. The method of claim 1, wherein said presence server determines said presence  
status of said sender based on one or more rules that aggregate extracted presence information.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein said recipient responds to said sender in another  
20 domain.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said presence information indicates if the  
message sender can be reached at one or more indicated devices.
- 25 7. The method of claim 1, wherein said presence information is obtained from a user  
registration process.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein said presence information is obtained by  
observing activities of a user.

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9. The method of claim 1, wherein said recipient can respond to said sender in real time.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said recipient can respond to said sender in non-  
5 real time.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said recipient can respond to said sender using a non-textual form of communication.

10 12. The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of domains is a plurality of client domains.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of domains is a plurality of server domains.

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14. A method for delivering an email message to a recipient, comprising:  
receiving said email message from a sender;  
obtaining a presence status of said sender across a plurality of domains; and  
providing a mechanism for said recipient to automatically respond to said sender  
20 at a device where said sender is believed to be present.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein said providing step allows said recipient to respond to said sender in another domain.

25 16. The method of claim 14, wherein said recipient can respond to said sender in real time.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein said recipient can respond to said sender in non-real time.

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18. The method of claim 14, wherein said recipient can respond to said sender using a non-textual form of communication.

19. An apparatus for delivering an email message to a recipient, comprising:  
5 a memory; and  
at least one processor, coupled to the memory, operative to:  
receive said email message from a sender;  
obtain a presence status of said sender from a presence server, wherein said  
presence status indicates a presence status of said sender across a plurality of domains; and  
10 deliver said email message to said recipient with an indication of a presence of  
said sender.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said presence server extracts presence information from a plurality of presence data stores.

21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said presence server translates said presence information to a standard format.

22. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said presence server determines said presence status of said sender based on one or more rules that aggregate extracted presence information.

23. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said recipient responds to said sender in another domain.

24. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said presence information indicates if the message sender can be reached at one or more indicated devices.

25. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein said recipient can respond to said sender using a non-textual form of communication.